



WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE

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Tel 303-236-4402 | westernnativetrout.org

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



DEAR FRIENDS,

Thank you for making 2018 yet another successful year for the Western Native Trout Initiative!

In 2018, the Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) and our partners funded eight habitat restoration projects benefiting our focal species with a total of \$232,640 National Fish Habitat Partnership funds leveraged to partner matches of almost \$2.4 million for a total projects value of \$2,621,163.

A new partnership in 2018 with the Resources Legacy Fund through their Open Rivers Fund, funded five projects in the Upper Bear River in Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming. The partnership will benefit Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, recreational fishing, and local communities and ranchers who divert water for irrigation. Open Rivers funding of \$296,000 was matched by \$1,476,623 in other private and public funding, for a total projects value of \$1,856,623. American Sportfishing Association's FishAmericaFoundation funded one additional project in Utah as part of this same portfolio of projects.

WNTI additionally funded nine small projects through our Small Grants Program, awarding \$23,205 in funding that was matched by \$621,026 in other public and private funding, for a total small grants projects value of \$644,231. WNTI's Small Grants program is funded through contributions from partners and individual donors like you. We would especially like to thank Running Rivers' Rocky Mountain Flyathlon for their ongoing partnership and support of our Small Grants projects in Colorado, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for funding support.

Collectively, projects funded in 2018 will remove or bypass 9 barriers to restore access to 55.25 miles of stream for fish passage, restore 13 miles of riparian habitat, complete 33 habitat assessments, assess five stream miles, and construct five barriers to protect 16.25 miles of high priority habitat for Greenback Cutthroat Trout, Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, and Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout in three separate projects.

PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH NATIONAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP FUNDS IN 2018:


- Rock Creek Greenback Cutthroat Trout Recovery Program Phases 3&4, Colorado
- Kootenai River GMU Interior Redband Trout Assessment, Idaho
- Tincup Creek Stream Restoration Project, Phase 2 (Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout), Idaho
- Leandro Creek Restoration Project (Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout), New Mexico
- Deep Creek Town Diversion Fish Passage (Interior Redband Trout), Oregon
- Wood River Ditch Fish Screen (Interior Redband Trout), Oregon
- West Pass Creek Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Restoration, Wyoming
- Coal Creek Bank Stabilization and Sediment Reduction (Bonneville Cutthroat Trout), Wyoming

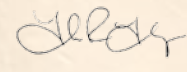
SMALL GRANTS PROJECTS FUNDED IN 2018:

- Bring Back the Natives Interior Redband Trout Poster Campaign, CA, ID, MT, NV, OR, WA
- Greenback Cutthroat Trout Poster & Printing, Colorado
- Confluence Barrier-Disturbed Area and Riparian Rehabilitation (Colorado River Cutthroat Trout), Colorado
- Brewery Outreach/Know Your Native Campaign (Colorado River Cutthroat, Greenback Cutthroat, Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout), Colorado
- "Match The Hatch" (Bull Trout, Interior Redband Trout), Oregon
- Rapid Riparian Re-vegetation Beaver Dam Analogues (Interior Redband Trout), Oregon
- Sheep Creek Lake Fish Trap Outreach (Colorado River Cutthroat Trout), Utah
- A Test for Trout (Bull Trout, Interior Redband Trout, Westslope Cutthroat Trout), Washington
- Popo Agie Gold (Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout), Wyoming

Thank you for being a part of the Western Native Trout Initiative in 2018. We could not accomplish all that we do without the continued support and dedication of our partners and donors. We are looking forward to continued success in 2019!

Sincerely,


JULIE MEKA CARTER
Chair, WNTI Steering Committee


THERESE THOMPSON
Coordinator

Results

Since its inception in 2006, the Western Native Trout Initiative has directed over \$5.5 million in federal fish habitat funds leveraged with over \$33 million public and private matching dollars for 161 priority native trout conservation and outreach projects. By leveraging funding provided to WNTI by the National Fish Habitat Partnership, WNTI and over 350 partners to date, have successfully improved the status of western native trout populations in 12 western states including Alaska. With the collaboration and coordination of WNTI Partners, together we have removed 96 barriers to fish passage, reconnected or improved 1,199 miles of native trout habitat, and placed 35 protective fish barriers to conserve important native trout conservation populations.

COMPLETED CRITICAL NATIVE TROUT POPULATION AND HABITAT ASSESSMENTS: In order to ensure our collaborative investments are directed toward the highest priority projects, WNTI has funded over 714 watershed, fish population, and habitat surveys to date.

COASTAL CUTTHROAT TROUT SYMPOSIUM

In November 2018, WNTI co-sponsored a two-day Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium in Newport, Oregon, along with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Coastal Cutthroat Trout Interagency Committee. The goal of the symposium was to share information and knowledge gained since the 2005 Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium and to share the results of the first range-wide assessment of the species, completed in 2017. Other sessions included topics on advancing the conservation and sustainable management of Coastal Cutthroat Trout, sharing essential knowledge on trout life history and ecology, defining and seeking solutions to the problem associated with cutthroat trout management and to discuss the development of coordinated, range-wide conservation, including data sharing. For more information on Coastal Cutthroat distribution data and other information, visit coastalcutthroattrout.org



Photo courtesy of James Losee, Washington Dept of Fish and Wildlife.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIZATION

The WNTI Steering Committee approved an updated strategic plan in November of 2016 and work began to set goals for the next 5–10 years. During the strategic plan review and subsequent update process, the Steering Committee recognized the difficulty of prioritizing conservation actions for 21 native trout and char species across 12 western states, especially given a finite supply of conservation funding. The Steering Committee identified prioritized conservation activities for 2017–2019 and 2020–2022 and work will continue in 2019–2021 to develop formal “conservation portfolios” specific to each prioritized species that will



Photo courtesy of Jason Jaacks, Open Rivers Fund.

support WNTI’s conservation goals and objectives over the next 3–6 years and help secure non-federal partners and funding. Up to 75% of WNTI’s annual National Fish Habitat Partnership funding is now prioritized for habitat projects that improve degraded or isolated habitats, reduce the threat of fragmentation, and/or allow for expansion or reconnection of habitat for Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout, Bonneville Cutthroat Trout and Interior Redband Trout (proposals accepted through WNTI’s 2017–2019 Request for Proposals cycle) and Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, and Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (2020–2022). For more information on WNTI’s strategic prioritization, visit westernnativetrout.org/strategic-plan

Additional strategic prioritization work, supported by a financial agreement from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6, began with a facilitated session with the leadership of the Bonneville Cutthroat interagency team in late 2017; a conservation projects portfolio was produced in early 2018 that subsequently brought in our first \$296,000 in funding for the first six projects in the portfolio from the Resources Legacy Fund’s Open Rivers Fund and the American Sportfishing Association’s FishAmerica Foundation. Later in 2018, WNTI facilitated additional work sessions with the interagency team leaders for the Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout and Interior Redband Trout and created conservation portfolios of prioritized projects to focus our fundraising efforts for those species. We are actively seeking partners to invest in these portfolios in 2019!

About WNTI

THE WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE is a public-private Fish Habitat Partnership that works collaboratively across 12 western states to conserve (protect, restore and recover) 21 native trout and char species. To achieve this mission, WNTI works together with its on-the-ground partners to:

ESTABLISH JOINT PRIORITIES FOR NATIVE TROUT CONSERVATION

Covering over 1.75 million square miles of public and privately managed lands, WNTI and our partners combine science-based assessments along with expert and local knowledge to establish joint priorities for native trout conservation at a landscape scale.

COORDINATE INVESTMENT AND COLLABORATIVE ACTION

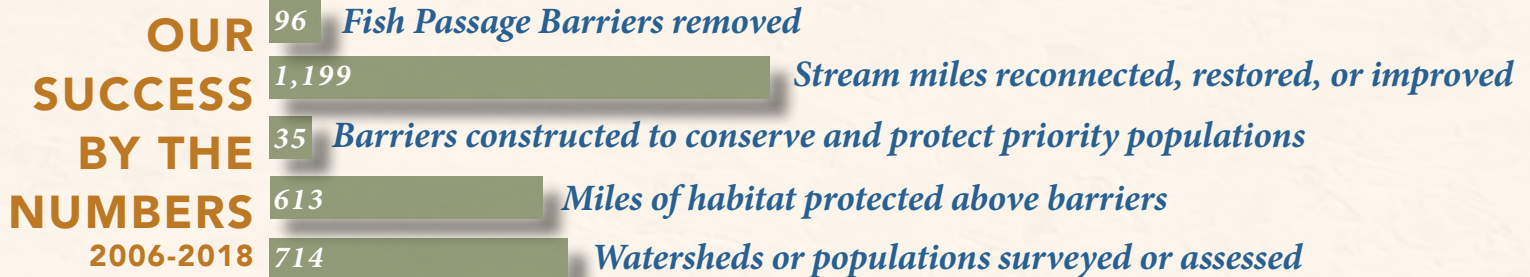
WNTI provides a forum for partners to coordinate and invest their collective assets and capacity toward completing the highest-priority, native trout conservation efforts across the West. Proposed and led by local communities and resource agencies, these projects are funded and supported through WNTI's grant programs and in kind contributions by our partners.

EDUCATION, OUTREACH AND STEWARDSHIP

WNTI seeks to support and sustain the ongoing efforts of our on-the-ground partners by raising awareness for the importance of healthy native trout watersheds and facilitating greater public support for native trout conservation within local communities. Through our Campaign for Western Native Trout, WNTI helps encourage private investment and involvement in native trout projects and regional native trout conservation initiatives.



Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout. Photo courtesy of Tyler Coleman.



STEERING COMMITTEE

Operating under the guidance of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Western Native Trout Initiative is governed by a Steering Committee that represents 12 western state fish and wildlife agencies, 3 federal resource management agencies, tribes, and nonprofit fisheries conservation organizations.

STAFF

Therese Thompson
Coordinator

Julie Meka Carter, Chair
Arizona Game and Fish Department

Jon Sjöberg, Vice Chair
Nevada Department of Wildlife

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Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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Melissa Dickard
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Yvette Paroz
U.S. Forest Service

Robert Clarke
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Warren Colyer
Trout Unlimited

Ed Schriever
Western Association
of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

THANK YOU PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Americanfishes.com
American Sportfishing Association
FishAmerica Foundation
Angling Trade Magazine
Arizona Game and Fish Department
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
ATLAS at Lander Arts and Sciences
Basin+Bend
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Clark Fork Coalition
Coastal Cutthroat Trout Interagency Committee
Coeur d'Alene Tribe
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
El Paso County, Colorado
Federation of Fly Fishers – Southwest Council
Friends of the Teton River
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
KeepEmWet Fishing
Kenai Watershed Forum
Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust
Klamath Lake Land Trust
Lake Country Umbrella Watershed Council
Long Tom Watershed Council
Lower Clark Fork Watershed Group
McKenzie Watershed Alliance

Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group
Middle Colorado Watershed Council
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Nathan Brown Fine Art
National Fish Habitat Partnership
National Forest Foundation
Native Fish Society
Native Trout Addicts
Nevada Department of Wildlife
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
North Fork John Day Watershed Council
Okanogan Land Trust
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
RepYourWater
Resources Legacy Fund (Open Rivers Fund)
Rocky Mountain Flyathlon (Running Rivers)
Sage Lion Media
Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers
Smith River Watershed Council
South Fork John Day Watershed Council
Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative
Spokane Riverkeeper

Terry Lee Wells Nevada
Discovery Museum
Trout Unlimited
Turner Endangered Species Fund, LLC
Upper Deschutes Watershed Council
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Geological Survey
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
West Hills Community College District
Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Wild Fish Conservancy
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

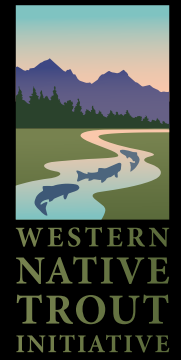
And all the individual donors who contribute to WNTI!

The future of native trout conservation depends on the generosity of individuals like you who care about sustaining healthy western watersheds. When you give to WNTI, 100% of your donation is leveraged to support on-the-ground, locally led projects.



Our Fish. Our Future.

Join us! westernnativetrout.org



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